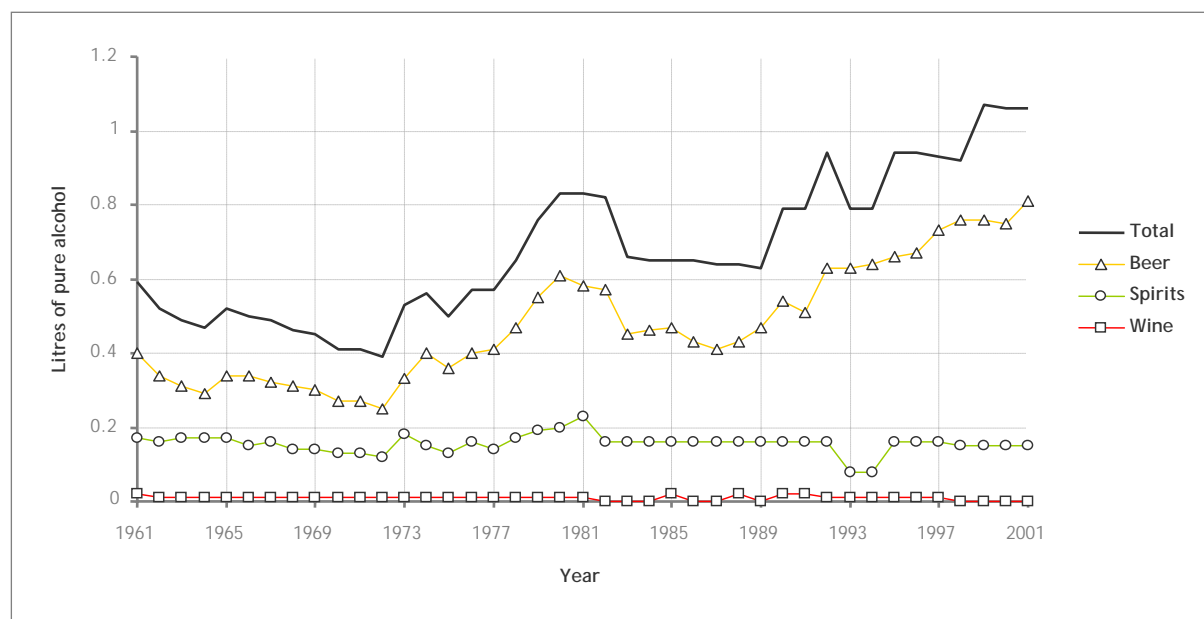


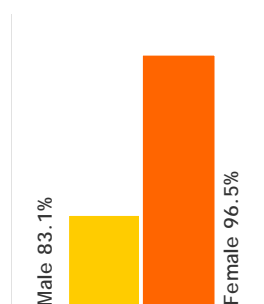
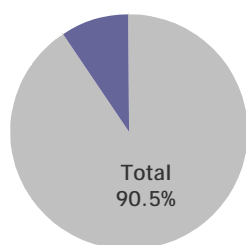
MALAYSIA

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)



Sources: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), World Drink Trends 2003

Lifetime abstainers



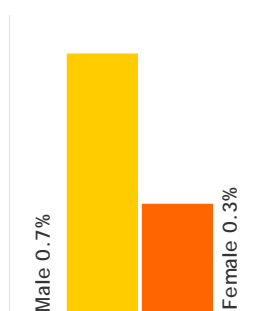
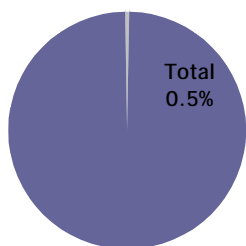
Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 6003$; males $n = 2657$ and females $n = 3346$. Sample population aged 18 years and above.¹

Estimates from key alcohol experts show that the proportion of adult males and females who had been abstaining (last year before the survey) was 35% (males) and 64% (females). Data is for after year 1995.²

A 1996 national survey among non-Muslim adults in Malaysia found that the rate of abstainers was 77% among the total population sampled.³

A survey conducted between November 1996 and April 1997 in Kuala Selangor among 523 respondents found that 12% (all of whom were male) admitted to drinking alcohol. There were significant differences among the races. From the Chinese 32% were drinkers, and from the Indians 23%. Only one Malay respondent admitted to drinking alcohol.⁴

Heavy and hazardous drinkers

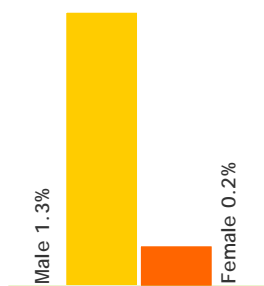
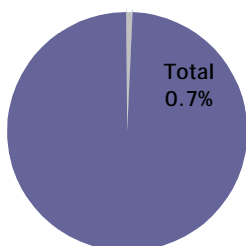


Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 6003$; males $n = 2657$ and females $n = 3346$. Sample population aged 18 years and above. Definition used: average consumption of 40 g or more of pure alcohol a day for men and 20 g or more of pure alcohol a day for women.¹

The National Health and Morbidity Survey of 1996, which among other aims set out to determine the prevalence of alcohol drinking among non-Muslim adults in Malaysia, showed that, of the 23% of the population who drank, 32.5% reported a high intake.³

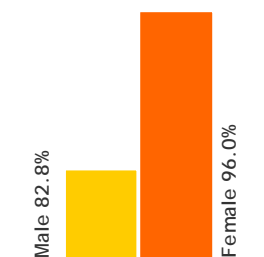
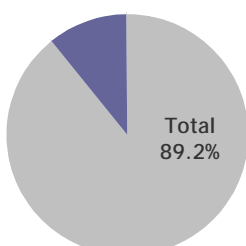
According to the 2003 World Health Survey (total sample size $n = 508$; males $n = 408$ and females $n = 100$), the mean value (in grams) of pure alcohol consumed per day among drinkers was 10.9 (total), 9.6 (males) and 14.6 (females).¹

Heavy episodic drinkers



Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 6003$; males $n = 2657$ and females $n = 3346$. Sample population aged 18 years and above. Definition used: at least once a week consumption of five or more standard drinks in one sitting.¹

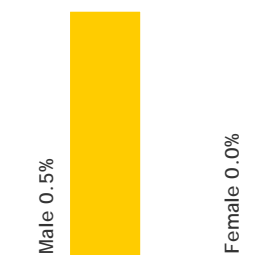
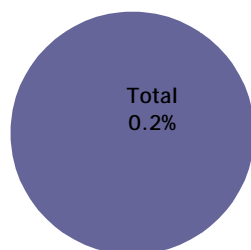
Youth drinking (lifetime abstainers)



Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 786$; males $n = 402$ and females $n = 384$. Sample population aged 18 to 24 years old.¹

More teenagers in Malaysia are starting to drink alcoholic beverages at an earlier age. 45% of Malaysian youths under the age of 18 consume alcohol regularly. Of all the legal and illegal drugs, alcohol is by far the most widely used by teenagers, and according to a national survey many are regularly drinking to excess.⁵

Youth drinking (heavy episodic drinkers)



Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 786$; males $n = 402$ and females $n = 384$. Sample population aged 18 to 24 years old. Definition used: at least once a week consumption of five or more standard drinks in one sitting.¹

Note: These are preliminary, early-release, unpublished data from WHO's World Health Survey made available exclusively for this report. Some estimates may change in the final analyses of these data.

Traditional alcoholic beverages

Arak is an alcoholic drink made by the distillation of the juice of the palm tree.

Toddy is an alcoholic drink made by the fermentation of the sap from a coconut palm. It is white and sweet with a characteristic flavour. It has an alcohol content of between 4% and 6% and a shelf life of about 24 hours.⁶

Samsu is a locally distilled potent spirit with an alcohol content of between 37% and 70%. There are over 150 brands of *samsu* available in the market. The majority of alcohol consumers among the rural poor are *samsu* drinkers.⁵

In the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo, indigenous people traditionally drink a homemade rice wine called **duak** or **tapai** in conjunction with harvest celebrations and social or communal gatherings. This rice wine is reportedly very potent. At such important functions, especially the harvest festival, which is of much significance for these agrarian folk, almost all are required to drink. Refusal by guests to partake of these drinks is a breach of etiquette. Such drinking is an integral part of the culture of these tribes.⁷

Unrecorded alcohol consumption

The unrecorded alcohol consumption in Malaysia is estimated to be 3.4 litres pure alcohol per capita for population older than 15 for the years after 1995 (estimated by a group of key alcohol experts).²

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

A survey found that alcoholics are 25% below average in work performance and they are 16 times more likely to be absent from their jobs.⁸

The Road Safety Council estimates that 30% of road accidents nationwide are caused by drinking and driving.⁵

Alcohol is a major factor in exacerbating poverty. In a month a rural labourer can spend about RM 300 (US\$ 80) on alcohol which is about how much he earns. The alcohol menace ruins families and contributes to the breakdown of the basic social fabric of society. Often it is the women who bear the brunt of this problem – wife battery, discord in the home, abused and deprived children, non-working or chronically ill husbands who become a burden to both the family and society. Besides loss in family income, the burden on the family is worsened when the drinker falls ill, cannot work and requires medical attention.⁵

In a study looking at 34 alcohol dependents with alcohol-induced psychotic disorder admitted to the Psychiatric Ward, Hospital Seremban over three years (1993–1995), it was found that the mean duration of drinking was 14.2 years and the mean weekly consumption was 69.5 units of alcohol. There was a family history of alcohol dependence in 44% of cases. The majority consumed *samsu* (68%) with beer being the second choice.⁹

In a recent study of 1000 patients undergoing upper gastrointestinal endoscopic examination, alcohol consumption was found to be a risk factor for gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (odds ratio 2.42) and reflux oesophagitis (odds ratio 3.22).¹⁰

Country background information

Total population 2003	24 425 000	Life expectancy at birth (2002)	Male	69.6
Adult (15+)	16 364 750		Female	74.7
% under 15	33	Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)	Male	10
Population distribution 2001 (%)			Female	8
Urban	58	Gross National Income per capita 2002	US\$	3540
Rural	42	In Malaysia, approximately 55% of the population are Muslim.		

Sources: Population and Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat, World Bank World Development Indicators database, The World Factbook 2003, The World Health Report 2004

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